

Paul introduces legislation to protect privacy *Proposed bill will end abuse of Social Security numbers*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Thursday, February 26, 1998

[Read](#)

[the text of the legislation.](#)

WASHINGTON, DC - Citing wide-spread abuse of the Social Security Number, US Rep. Ron Paul (R-Surfside, Texas) has this week introduced the Privacy Protection Act of 1998, HR 3261, to protect the privacy and rights of Americans by forbidding the use of the Social Security Number for any purpose other than directly related to the administration of the Social Security System.

"The misuse of the Social Security Number (SSN) is more widespread than ever before, and the exposure to risk for Americans is growing exponentially. Since the SSN is part of a federal program created by Congress, it is Congress' responsibility to ensure it is not used to violate the privacy of American citizens," said Paul. "As the SSN has evolved into a *de facto* national ID number, Americans are exposed to risk from fraud; by obtaining a person's SSN and birth date, criminals can obtain credit cards, birth certificates, drivers' licenses and more. Further, by obtaining the SSN and couple other easy-to-find pieces of information, a criminal can get into people's bank accounts and medical records."

When the Social Security System, and the SSN, were introduced in 1934, it was for use only in administering the system. Today, there are almost 40 congressionally-authorized uses of the SSN, and many state's require that the SSN be used for a range of activities, including obtaining drivers' licenses and voter registration. Many private organizations have begun using the SSN, as well, further opening the door to abuse as the ID drifts further and further from its original purpose.

"Perhaps the most disturbing abuse of the SSN is the congressionally-authorized rule forcing parents to get a number for their newborn children in order to claim them as dependents; forcing parents to register their children with a federal agency ID number is more like something out of a George Orwell *1984* nightmare than the aspirations for a liberty-oriented republic which inspired our nation's founders," said Paul.

Paul said if the goal of some members of Congress and employees of the federal government is to create a national identification system, then it should be openly debated. As it is, those favoring such an unconstitutional program are implementing such a tool slowly under the guise of the SSN.

"The drafters of the Constitution would be horrified by this abuse of the privacy of Americans," said Paul. "The last thing the American people want is for the government to rob, or allow others to rob, them of their privacy and expose them to unnecessary risks; and a reduction of privacy and exposure to risk is precisely what the expanding use of the SSN poses."

(30)